

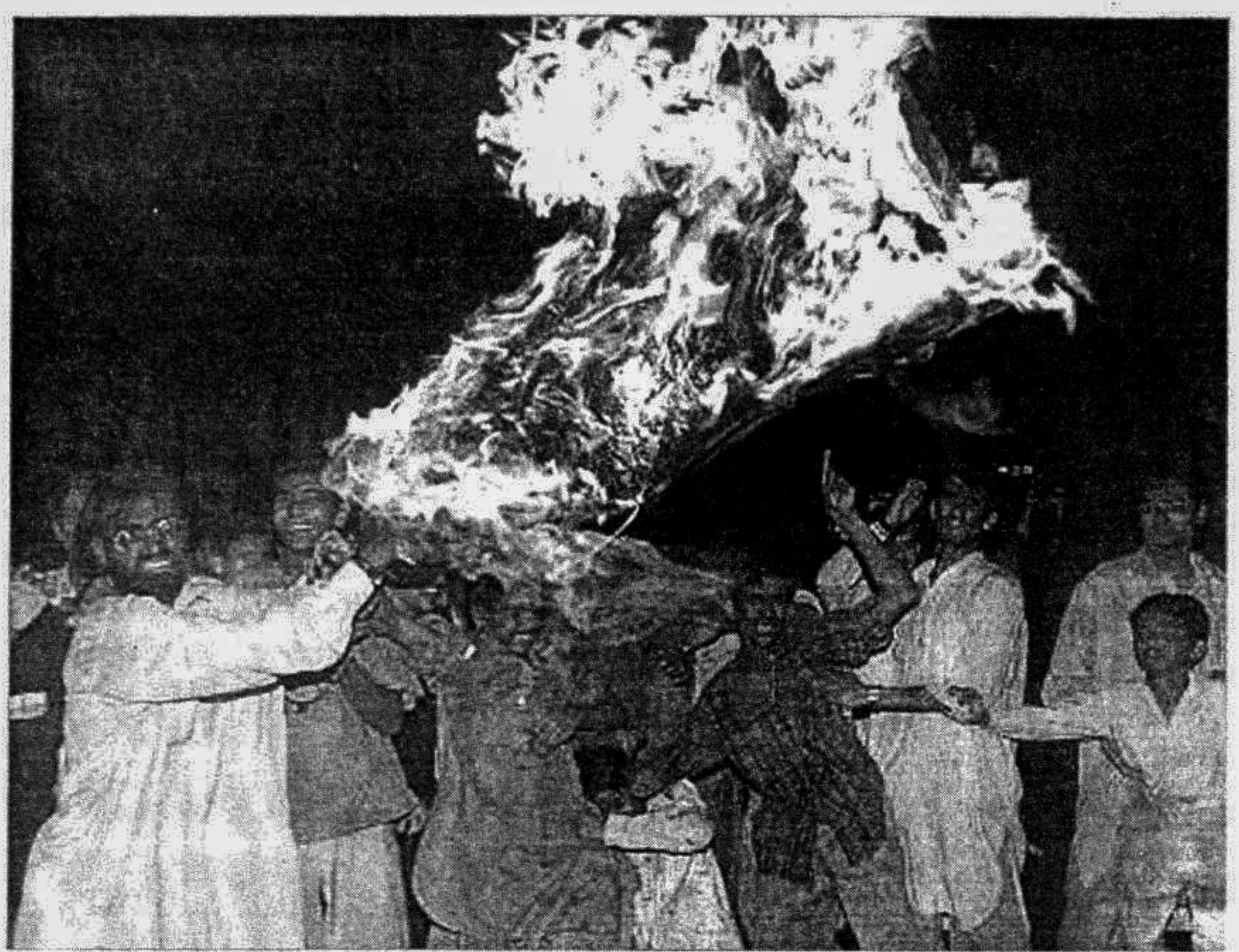


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Star Sport

DHAKA TUESDAY, JUNE 22, 1999 Email: dssports@bdonline.com



OVERNIGHT VILLAIN! Angry Pakistani fans burn an effigy of national cricket team captain Wasim Akram at Karachi on June 20 after the World Cup final loss to Australia.

— Internet photo

Shock, sadness & spleen

KARACHI, July 21 (AFP/AP): Pakistani cricket fans furious at their team's dismal loss to Australia in the World Cup final burned an effigy of captain Wasim Akram during a protest here today, witnesses said.

In the nearby city of Hyderabad, disgruntled youths burned tyres and pelted vehicles with stones following Pakistan's eight-wicket defeat in Sunday's final at Lord's, residents said.

Some Pakistanis watching the final fainted, others burst into tears and one elderly man in the central town of Jacobabad died of shock, newspapers reported.

In the central Karachi district of Nazimabad, witnesses said two dozen mourners bore a coffin in a mock funeral procession commemorating Pakistan's World Cup demise.

Fans in this bustling port city tore up large portraits of several of the top players, residents said. Some called for an inquiry into the batting collapse which saw Pakistan all out for 132, the lowest total ever in a World Cup final.

Fans even called for the arrest of those responsible for the humiliation and an eradication of the "pollution" allegedly afflicting the national side, witnesses said.

Karachi police detained a

man for beating up his brother who last week had named his son after Wasim Akram.

Mohammad Ashraf, a 35-year-old shopkeeper, slapped, kicked and threatened to kill his brother Mohammad Akram when he refused to change his son's name after the World Cup fiasco, police said.

The boy was named Wasim Akram after Pakistan beat New Zealand by nine wickets to qualify for the final.

"My brother has gone mad. I still love Wasim Akram," a police officer quoted the boy's father as saying.

Police later released Ashraf after he promised not to harm his brother.

The Pakistani skipper's home was pelted with stones, his family received death threats, and his father was briefly kidnapped after Pakistan lost to arch-rivals India in Bangalore in the 1996 World Cup quarter-final.

Australia's crushing win shattered the dreams of millions of cricket-crazy fans in Pakistan who had prepared massive firework displays and street celebrations in anticipation of victory.

Tahir ul Qadri, leader of the Pakistan Awami Tehrik Islamic political party, called for a probe into the defeat and said players should be punished if

allegations of match-fixing and illegal betting were proved.

Several members of the Pakistani side are due to hear their fate soon with the imminent release of a judicial inquiry into alleged match-fixing in the past.

In his hometown of Lahore, fans burned giant colour posters of Akram. Scores of young men danced around the flaming pictures shouting "down with Wasim".

They also burned pictures of Ijaz Ahmed and condemned the entire Pakistani lineup.

In the congested Punjab provincial capital of Lahore where a maze of narrow streets wind through tea stalls, stately mosques and ancient Mogul ruins, fans watched with dread as their team's batting side collapsed.

Throughout Pakistan streets were deserted as people stayed inside to watch their team. Some people bought new television sets, organised home gatherings. In poor Pakistan where most people don't own a television set, people gathered in restaurants, shops and tea stalls to watch the match.

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Ahmed watched the World Cup final at a local tea stall.

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Ex-stars sore

KARACHI, June 21: Former Pakistan Test players were quick to rub salt into the wound after their team's dismal showing in the World Cup final defeat by Australia yesterday, reports Reuters.

"Unbelievable, pathetic and awful," said former off-spinner Tauseef Ahmad after Australia reached their target of 133 in just 20.1 overs.

"It felt like I was cut in half watching Pakistan bat like amateurs. They are far better than what they showed. Probably, the big match pressure took a toll on them," said former batsman Mansoor Akhtar who played on the losing side in the 1987 World Cup semifinal.

Aqib Javed, a member of Pakistan's 1992 World Cup winning side, said: "We won in 1992 because Imran (Khan) and Javed (Miandad) took all the

pressure on them. There are no players of that class now."

"The match was decided on the spin of coin. I think it was a good toss for Steve Waugh to lose and bad toss for Wasim to win," said Intikhab Alam, manager of the 1992 team.

"It was a bad decision to bat. The match was being played on a newly laid track, the weather was overcast and if the skipper was bowling is our strength then he should have been wise to give his bowlers a chance to exploit the early conditions," said Intikhab.

He joined the growing band who want the final to be played on a best-of-three basis.

"You prepare yourself for four years, then play brilliantly to qualify for the final, have one bad day and all your efforts go down the drain," he said.

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DAY OF THE KANGAROOS: Australian fans hold aloft inflatable kangaroos while celebrating their team's World Cup triumph at Lord's on Sunday.

Pioneer

HI-FI

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Celebrations down under

SYDNEY, June 21 (Reuters/Internet): Thousands of Australians on Monday hailed their nation's triumph in the World Cup cricket final against Pakistan, and plans were announced for celebrations on the team's return.

"Swift and sweet," The Australian national newspaper blared in a frontpage devoted to Australia's eight-wicket demolition of Pakistan. It accompanied a photograph of a celebrating Shane Warne, with arms raised, and Australian captain Steve Waugh.

The Australian's sports lift-out trumpeted: "You were Warned".

The newspaper said the win, Australia's second World Cup title, was "the sweetest of all for a team that needed to win seven consecutive matches to be crowned champions".

The Sydney Morning Herald

declared "Aussies storm to World Cup glory" and "We are the champions".

The Herald said Australian cricketers were truly world champions of cricket, now dominating Test and one-day cricket.

"Now they can rightfully claim to have everything covered," the newspaper said, adding the World Cup victory vindicated Australian selectors' decision to split Test and one-day teams.

Leg-spinner Warne captured four for 33 as Pakistan were dispatched for 132 in 39 of their 50 overs, the lowest total in the competition's seven finals. Australia romped home at 133 for two in 20.1 overs.

Melbourne's The Age newspaper toasted the win with the front page headline: "It's our Cup! Australia demolishes Pakistan".

The Sydney Morning Herald

— AFP photo

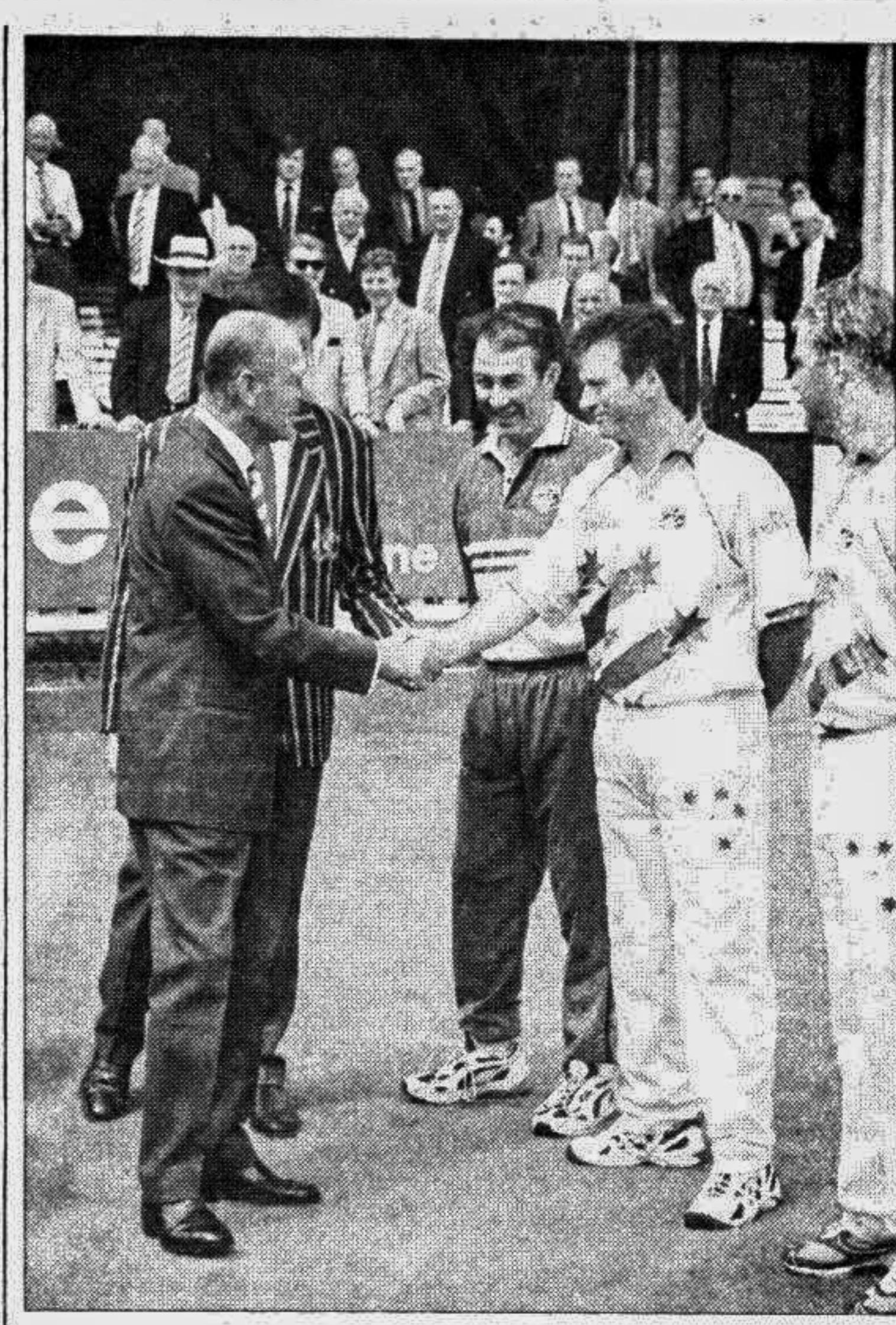
"Australia is back on top of the mountain in one-day cricket for the first time in 12 years," The Age said.

It labelled the win as a major triumph for Steve Waugh, who earlier this year replaced Mark Taylor as Australia's captain.

The triumph headlined news reports around the country, while Australia's two major cities, Sydney and Melbourne, both announced plans for ticker tape parades to honour Waugh's men on their return.

Talkback radio programmes also invited listeners to come up with ideas to honour the Australian team on its return.

Thousands of Australians gathered in hotels and clubs around the country to watch the final, but the earlier-than-expected finish meant they could get a few hours sleep before Monday's normal work day.



Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Philip, being introduced to Australian captain Steve Waugh before the World Cup final against Pakistan at Lord's on June 20. — AFP photo

Wauchs in mourning

SYDNEY, June 21: Of the Waugh twins at world cricket's World Cup turned to sadness Monday when their beloved grandfather died, reports AFP.

Edward, 89, died within hours of Australia's winning cricket's biggest prize.

News of his passing in a northern New South Wales hospital reached his son Rodger, father of the twins, at 7 a.m. in Sydney (2100 GMT Sunday).

Steve and Mark Waugh had vowed to win the Cup for their ailing "Pop", but never got the chance to share their triumph with him.

Steve's wife Lynette broke the news to them in London by telephone, Rodger said.

"We just heard from the boys and they're very upset," Rodger Waugh told reporters.

"They were pretty close to their Pop. He's been sick for two or three weeks but he was not in a lot of pain, and they were very thankful for that."

"It has mucked their plans up. It has put a damper on everything."

Edward's funeral service is scheduled for Thursday.

Don't go Warnie

SYDNEY, June 21: Australian leg spinner Shane Warne dominated the British sporting headlines here on Monday, all newspapers praising him and some pleading for him not to quit the game, reports AFP.

Warne's four wickets for 33 against Pakistan in front of 30,000 fans at Lord's helped turn the final into a one-sided affair.

The 29-year-old bowler, cricket's most famous player and just back from major shoulder surgery last year, later said he would be considering his future in the weeks to come.

"I will take a few weeks off with my family and then decide what to do," the 29-year-old said after earning the man-of-the-match award for taking four for 33.

Asked if he might call it a day, he said: "I have spoken to a few people about my future, I am not sure what I will do."

"Today, I am very proud of what we have achieved. Deep down it is a matter of great satisfaction that I helped Australia win."

Warne, who struggled back to his best form during the tournament after being sidelined for six months last year following the surgery, had suggested at the start of the year that he was considering ending his career.

His warning, however, had been seen as an emotional over-reaction after he was dropped from the Test side for a month in seven years.

Warne, written off as a has-been earlier in the event, took 20 wickets in the tournament, sharing the top spot with New Zealander Geoff Allott. He was named man of the match in both the semi-final and final. He has taken 317 Test wickets and passed 200 one-day wickets on Sunday.

Australian captain Steve Waugh said: "It's a personal decision Shane has to make."

"As a player and captain, I would like him to continue because he is a great bowler."

"But in the end the decision rests on him. Mark Taylor made his own decision to retire, similarly Warne has to make his."

Meanwhile the press was showering ulogies in the honour of the greatest leg-spinner in the world, reports BSS.

State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader handed over the cheque to Greenidge at the Royal Garden Hotel yesterday.

Greenidge receives cheque

LONDON, June 21: Coach of the Bangladesh cricket team Gordon Greenidge has received the prize money pledged by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina following the team's victories over Pakistan and Scotland in the World Cup, reports BSS.

State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader handed over the cheque to Greenidge at the Royal Garden Hotel yesterday.



— AFP photo